

Facilities

Introduction

A public library building should offer the community a compelling invitation to enter, read, listen, and learn. It must comply with the regulations of the Americans with Disabilities Act. The building should be flexible in design to respond to changing use and service patterns. It must be able to accommodate growing collections and a variety of formats. The design of the building needs to encourage extensive public use, support staff efficiency, and encourage economy.

Standards

1. Based upon "Guidelines for Determining Space Needs" (Appendix C), the facility is adequate to carry out the library's service plan.
2. Planning documents for library construction projects are based on a building program that includes: user input, long-range plans, service needs, site analysis, and internal space analysis.
3. All library buildings and building plans are in compliance with federal, state, and local laws including: fire, safety, sanitation, handicapped accessibility, energy conservation, and any other state and local codes or regulations.
4. Plans for new library construction or additions to existing buildings are designed by an architect licensed to practice in Virginia. Engineers involved in construction projects are also licensed by the Commonwealth of Virginia.
5. The library building plan addresses the implementation of current and future



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telecommunications and electronic information technologies.

6. The library is secure and provides for safe use by the public and the staff. Exterior lighting is sufficient to provide for the security of the public and staff.
7. In determining space needs, careful consideration is given to use projections, the number of seating spaces provided, staffing levels, and the size of public meeting rooms.
8. Adequate and convenient parking is available to the public and the staff on or adjacent to the library's site.

Essential Guidelines

The library . . .

- Meets minimum "Guidelines for Determining Space Needs" (Appendix C).
- Complies with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulations such as: building, furnishings, and parking.
- Complies with fire, safety, and other federal, state, and local building codes.
- Is equipped with telephone lines and touch tone telephones.
- Is equipped with telecommunications equipment that meet recommended hardware and software configurations, and has dedicated telecommunications lines for access and exchange (Appendix D).
- Meets local or state ADA requirements, whichever provides greater access.
- Has an exterior sign identifying the facility as a library.

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- Provides comfort and efficiency in heating, air conditioning, and rate of air exchange.
- Meets federal, state, and local restroom requirements.
- Has an exterior book drop in a well-lit area and, if it empties into the interior of the library, is contained in a fireproof room.
- Provides a light level of fifty to seventy sustained foot-candles at table-top height in public service areas and thirty to fifty foot-candles at table-top height in storage areas. Lighting is evenly distributed and of such quality to provide adequate light without glare. Optimum foot-candles exceed 35 at floor level and 50 at table level.
- The library's signage includes use of the international library symbol.

Aspiring Guidelines

The library . . .

- Exceeds minimum "Guidelines for Determining Space Needs" (Appendix C).
- Is located in an area with high visibility from a major transportation route and/or easy access from roadways.
- Features aesthetically pleasing atmosphere and is sensitive to design of surrounding buildings.
- Has convenient interior arrangement for general public use with minimum staffing required.
- Has one circulation desk to serve entire building, which allows for maximum sight supervision of the building.
- Provides a pay telephone, or other appropriate phone access, for the public.

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- Equips restrooms with a diaper changing station and shelving for personal items.
- Features well-designed signs and graphics to highlight key service areas.
- Provides convenient delivery access.
- Provides meeting room space for the public.
- Conducts a written space needs assessment every five years.

Excel Guidelines

The library . . .

- Features minimum load bearing walls to allow for major rearrangement of services within existing space and for future expansion.
- Occupies a single ground floor level if library building is under 20,000 square feet.
- Locates single public entrance in area of highest pedestrian traffic and in close proximity to most accessible parking.
- Uses durable, easy to maintain furniture and equipment that harmonize with building and interior design of the library. Provides a mixture of study and lounge seating.
- Effectively utilizes traditional, flexible, and/or compact shelving for collection access and storage.
- Provides access to the meeting room and restrooms without entering a library service area.
- Has ADA-compliant equipment.
- Provides public meeting space with multimedia capabilities.

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